

Psycho-Social Factors Causing Stress: A Study of Teacher Educators

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Abstract

Purpose: The present investigation was planned to determine the influence of type of personality, gender, age, qualification and experience causing stress among teacher educators at work. Method: A sample of 100 subjects from male and female teachers teaching in teacher training colleges, Delhi, India was drawn randomly. The data was collected by applying the following tools: (i) Organizational Role Stress Scale (ORS) by Uday Pareek (1993). This tool measures role space and role set conflict. Test carries 50 items which are rated at five point scale. (ii) R-R introversion-Extroversion Scale by Dr. R.N.Singh and Dr. R.B.Tripathi (2010). This tool measures the personality in terms of Highly Extrovert, Predominantly Extrovert, Balanced Ambivert, Predominantly Introvert and Highly Introvert. This tool consists of 50 items with 'yes' and 'no' alternative responses. Results: The results revealed that (i) Female teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to male teacher educators. (ii) Younger teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to older teacher educators. (iii) Less qualified teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to highly qualified teacher educators. (iv) Less experienced teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to highly experienced teacher educators. (v) Introvert type of teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to Extrovert teacher educators.

Keywords: Demographic and psychological factors, Organizational role stress

INTRODUCTION

The speed at which change is taking place in the world today is certainly overwhelming and breathtaking. In the fast changing world of today, everyone experiences stress in their personal as well as professional lives. No individual and no profession is free from stress. Thus in modern times, stress in general and job stress in particular has become a part of the life and has received considerable attention in recent years. Stress as a phenomenon has been researched in various professions and the teaching profession is no exception. It has been a common finding that educators experience higher levels of stress than other professions. (De Jesus and Conboy, 2001)

Stress is a universal phenomenon; however an individual's response to it is highly personalized. It is an amalgamation of who the person is, what he has experienced and learned and how he feels at the time when stress hits. Some individuals find it easy to stay calm in the midst of chaos and complexities; while others feel dejected. Some gain weight, some lose weight; some can't fall asleep while others sleep in excess.

Kahn et al. (1964) were the earliest to draw attention to organizational stress in general, and role stress in particular. Pareek's (1976) definition of role as the position occupied by a person as defined by the expectations of significant persons, including the role occupant, indicates that there are inherent problems in the performance of a role, and therefore stress is inevitable.

The phenomenon of stress among teachers has become a global concern and is receiving considerable attention. In the recent years, several studies have been undertaken to study the factors affecting stress among teachers. Work stress suffered by teachers can seriously affect their health and can also adversely affect their students and the learning environment.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Education is widely recognized as a key for the future; hence the mission for the teacher takes on more importance than ever before. Historically, education unions have insisted that quality education requires quality teachers. This is as true as ever. But we now have a situation in which the expectations on teachers have increased dramatically. Teachers are themselves expected to be agents of change. At the same time, difficulties facing educational institutions and teachers have also multiplied. All these developments have created a situation

where the role of the teacher is becoming more and more complex and demanding. Due to speedy growth and development in the entire sphere, the level of stress has gone up. The teachers, staffs and administrators find themselves in the grip of stress.

There is considerable evidence that the stress being experienced by teachers is putting considerable strain on their professional performance and indeed on their personal lives including their family relationships. Teachers are confronted by a set of changes which lead to contradictory demands on them from society. Behavioral symptoms of teacher stress include poor time management, inability to concentrate, irritation and aggression, withdrawal from supportive relationships, abuse of alcohol, caffeine or tobacco and, if not managed properly, it leads to absenteeism, resignation, conflict with students and turnover intentions (*Stevenson and Harper, 2006*).

Traditionally university teaching has been perceived as a stress-free profession, particularly by those who are not related to this profession (Ficsher, 1994), however since the last two decades with the inflow of many private sector universities, higher education institutions are commonly labeled as stressful environments. During the last decade, a fast growth has been observed in higher education institutions, particularly in developing countries, leading to higher competition and deteriorated organizational climate in most of the public and private sector universities. The phenomenon of stress among teachers has become a global concern and is receiving considerable attention. In the recent years, several studies have been undertaken to study the factors affecting stress among teachers. The available literature has muddled the water. Moreover, very few studies have been conducted so far in the country on stress among teacher educators.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were achieved in the present study

1. To compare the Organizational role stress level in male and female teacher educators.
2. To compare the Organizational role stress in teacher educators as per their age.
3. To compare the Organizational role stress level in teacher educators as per their Qualifications.
4. To compare the Organizational role stress in teacher educators as per their experience.
5. To compare the Organizational role stress in teacher educators as per their type of personality.

METHODOLOGY

A sample of 100 subjects from male and female teachers teaching in teacher training colleges, Delhi, India was drawn randomly. The data was collected by applying the tools: (i) Organizational Role Stress Scale (ORS) by Udai Pareek (1993). This tool measures role space and role set conflict. Test carries 50 items which are rated at five point scale. (ii) R-R introversion-Extroversion Scale by Dr. R.N.Singh and Dr. R.B.Tripathi (2010). Tool measures the personality in terms of Highly Extrovert, Predominantly Extrovert, Balanced Ambivert, Predominantly Introvert and Highly Introvert. Tool consists of 50 items with 'yes' and 'no' alternative responses.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

Table 1 Showing the Mean and SD of Role stress as per gender of teacher educators

Compared Groups	N	Mean	S. Deviation	Df	t value	Significant Level
Male	42	65.42	30.14	98	14.16	*
Female	58	74.07	39			

Note: * Significant at 0.01 level, ** Significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 indicates that the mean value of male teacher educators is 65.42 and mean value of female teacher educators is 74.07. Higher the mean value higher the stress. Statistically calculated 't' value is 14.16 which is higher than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in role stress as per gender of teacher educators is rejected. Hence, it can be concluded that female teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to male teacher educators.

Table 2 Showing the Mean and SD of Role stress as per ages of teacher educators

Compared Groups	N	Mean	S. Deviation	Df	t value	Significant Level
Below 35 years	56	72.75	37.67	98	13.84	*
Above 35 years	44	67.5	33.11			

Note: * Significant at 0.01 level, ** Significant at 0.05 level

Table 2 shows that the mean value of teacher educators below the age of 35 years is 72.75 and mean value of teacher educators above the age of 35 years is 67.5. Higher the mean value higher the stress. Statistically calculated 't' value is 13.84 which is higher than the table value. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in organizational role stress as per the ages of teacher educators is rejected. Therefore it can be concluded that teacher educators below the age of 35 years are more likely to experience stress as compared to teacher educators above the age of 35 years.

Table 3 Showing the Mean and SD of role stress as per qualifications of teacher educators

Compared Groups	N	Mean	S. Deviation	Df	t value	Significant Level
Less Qualified	58	71.13	37.7	98	13.8	*
Highly Qualified	42	69.48	33			

Note: * Significant at 0.01 level, ** Significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 reveals that the mean value of less qualified teacher educators is 71.13 and the mean value of highly qualified teacher educators is 69.48. Higher the mean value higher the stress. Statistically calculated 't' value is 13.8 which is higher than the table value. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in role stress as per qualifications of teacher educators is rejected. Therefore it can be inferred that less qualified teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to highly qualified teacher educators.

Table 4 Showing the Mean and SD of Role stress as per experience of teacher educators

Compared Groups	N	Mean	S. Deviation	Df	t value	Significant Level
Less experience	66	73.03	36.31	98	13.27	*
High experience	34	65.41	34.30			

Note: * Significant at 0.01 level, ** Significant at 0.05 level

Table 4 indicates that the mean value of less experienced teacher educators is 73.03 and the mean value of highly experienced teacher educators is 65.41. Higher the mean value higher the stress. Statistically calculated 't' value is 13.27 which is higher than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in role stress as per of experience of teacher educators is rejected. Hence it can be concluded that less experienced teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to highly experienced teacher educators.

Table 5 Showing the Mean and SD of Role stress as per type of personality of teacher educators

Compared Groups	N	Mean	S. Deviation	Df	t value	Significant Level
Extrovert Personality	70	66.51	35	98	12.58	*
Introvert Personality	30	79.6	36			

Note: * Significant at 0.01 level, ** Significant at 0.05 level

Table 5 reveals that the mean value of extrovert teacher educators is 66.51 and the mean value of introvert teacher educators is 79.6. Higher the mean value higher the works stress. Statistically calculated 't' value is 12.58 which is higher than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in role stress as per type of personality of teacher educators is rejected. Therefore it can be inferred that introvert type of teacher educators are more likely to experience stress as compared to extrovert type of teacher educators.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The findings of the present study in relation to age, is consistent with the previous research findings such as, *Beena and Poduval (1992)* found that when age increases, experienced stress also increased due to the increase in the responsibilities. As per educational qualification, the present study reveals that teacher educators vary in their stress level as their educational qualification varies. Less qualified teacher educators feel more stressed than highly qualified teacher educators. This finding is also consistent with the review of previous researches. Example, *Wayne J. Pitts (2007)* also found that people who feel educationally under prepared are more likely to experience high level of occupational stress and more likely to have negative manifestation of stress than their counterpart. In terms of work experience, this study reveals that there is significant difference in the occupational

stress level as the year of experience of teacher educator varies. Less experienced teacher educators are more prone to work stress than highly experienced. Perhaps, the reason for this might be because, less experienced teacher educators do not possess much practical knowledge that can help them to control and adjust their work demands. As a result they can feel that they are less efficient to perform the particular roles that direct them to experience higher level of stress. Similarly to the present study, *Blix et al. (1994)* conducted a study on occupational stress among university teachers and found that faculty having less than 10 years of experience had higher stress than faculty with more than 20 years of experience.

In regard to the type of personality, the present study reveals that the mean scores of Extrovert and Introvert teacher educators is 66.51 and 79.6 respectively. Thus, it was found that teacher educators with Introvert trait of personality feel more stressed at work than their counterparts. This may be because work settings do not provide sufficient opportunities to work alone and in isolation. However, the finding of the present study in terms of personality is in contrast with the review of related literature. For example, *Helbrum (1989)* in a study observed that extrovert type of people reported higher role stress than introvert type of people.

CONCLUSION

It is expected that the present study will contribute to the better understanding of variables that lead to occupational stress and this can help teacher educators to deal with it effectively and successfully. Further, findings can help to implement effective preventing programmes against occupational stress, considering how different employers and employees perceive stress at work.

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